

Aug. 12 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

in the White House, too, because it's awful easy to get hidebound there and to stay with the conventional wisdom.

But the most important thing is, to me anyway, they want to take us all along for the ride. And they think the people who worked this stage tonight whose names we'll never know deserve the same chance we have to send their children to college and to build the American dream for their families. They think in the arena of citizenship there are no backup singers, that everybody should have a starring role, and that's real important to me.

So that's the last thing I'd say to you. Whoopi said it right; I'm not going anywhere except to a different line of work. I'll try to be a useful citizen, and I'll try to hang around. But it's in your hands now. And the best thing you could do to honor me is to go out to everybody you can find between now and November,

through every network of influence you have, and say, "Hey, the best is still out there, and the problems are still out there, and the challenges are still out there."

And those of you who are at least as old as I am know that the kind of chance we have today to build the future of our dreams for our kids maybe—maybe—comes along once in a lifetime, and nothing stays the same.

So thanks for the honor. Thanks for the memories you gave me tonight. But don't stop thinking about tomorrow.

God bless you, and thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:15 p.m. at a private residence. In his remarks, he referred to entertainers Shirley MacLaine, Red Buttons, and Whoopi Goldberg; and the President's brother, Roger Clinton, mother-in-law, Dorothy Rodham, and brothers-in-law Tony and Hugh Rodham.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Brunch Honoring the Cabinet in Los Angeles

August 13, 2000

The President. Well, first of all, let me say I'm glad to see you here in good spirits. Are you ready to leave and win? [*Applause*] I want to thank Mayor Rendell and Mayor Archer and Congresswoman Sanchez, Joe Andrew, all the leaders of our Democratic Party. I want to thank all of you who have helped me over these last 8 years. I want to thank you for your commitment to helping Al Gore and Joe Lieberman.

I want to say something—I hope we can be more positive and more specific than our friends were in Philadelphia. But I do just want to—I'm just standing up here on the stage thinking about one thing. You know, when they wanted to show harmony and inclusion and all that, they had to put their leaders in a closet and go scare up people off the street to get on the stage. [*Laughter*] When we want to show harmony and inclusion, all we have to do is bring our team up on the stage.

When they want to show harmony and inclusion, they have to use the people they've got on the stage to hide their policies. When we want to show harmony and inclusion, all we have to do is talk about what we've done, and

even more important, what Al Gore and Joe Lieberman are going to do. There's a big difference.

And so, I just want to say when I heard them talking about how we coasted through the last 8 years—[*laughter*]—I sort of thought, where did I get all this gray hair anyway? [*Laughter*] I sort of thought, where do they think those jobs came from, where do they think those educational statistics came from, where do they think the cut in the welfare rolls in half, and the decline in the crime rate, and the fact that over 40 million more Americans are breathing clean air? And I could talk here until dawn about it.

Do you remember when they were in? They took credit when the Sun came up in the morning. [*Laughter*] The Republicans are in, and "It's morning in America. The Sun came up again today." [*Laughter*] "Look at it. There it is in the sky. We did it. There it is." [*Laughter*]

Well, God made the Sun rise, not the Republicans or the Democrats. But President Kennedy once reminded us that "Here on Earth, God's work must truly be our own." That is what this

Cabinet has tried to do—has tried to make the work of making this a more decent, more just, as well as a more prosperous country, their work.

Let me just tell you one story. One night in a rather dark period for the administration, not long after the American people decided to give the Republicans a chance to run the Congress in the '94 election, in early '95, Vice President Gore and I invited a couple of Presidential scholars to come to the White House to talk to us in a very quiet way about where we were at this moment in history, what was going on, what we ought to be thinking about and looking at. And one of these scholars looked at me and the Vice President, and he said, "You guys don't have to worry. You're going to win reelection." And I said, "Why do you say that?" He said, "I spent my whole life studying administrations. You have the most loyal Cabinet since Thomas Jefferson's second administration."

Now, you may take that for granted, but you've got to understand, we live and work in a town where most of the people who write about things think loyalty is a vice, not a virtue—[laughter]—and where all the pressures are designed to get people to think about anything other than the work they're doing for the American people, to divert their attention, to break their concentration, to undermine long-term plans. It's about politics, not people.

This administration has been about people, not politics. And that's why these folks behind me have done so much good. A lot of them have been here the whole 8 years. Let me say to all of you—I don't want to give the speech I'm going to give tomorrow night—[laughter]—but I do want to say this—

Audience member. Practice on us. [Laughter]

The President. Practice on us. [Laughter] It's kind of like these singers who have been around a long time; they always sing their old songs. I once went to a concert where Tina Turner sang "Proud Mary," and she said, "I've been singing this song for 25 years, but it gets better every time I sing it." [Laughter] So there won't be any surprises. [Laughter]

What I want to say to you is this. Elections are about the future. And people get—the people who vote in elections are all of us, and they've been making pretty good decisions for over 200 years, or we still wouldn't be around here. But the world is growing ever more complex, and they have access to more and more

information than ever before, which is good on the one hand, but on the other hand, it means it may be harder to concentrate on and distill out the essential meat of any decision that has to be made.

When I was a boy coming up, we had three television stations, one for each of the networks, and we didn't have much option on what we watched at night in the news. Now you can watch news in seven or eight different formats, and if you just want to watch a movie and skip it altogether, you can. So there's more information than ever before out there, but it's also harder to get clarity.

And I want to ask you something seriously. All of us have done our best, and we've still got a little ways to go, and we've got a lot of things we think we can get done before we leave. But this is a political convention to nominate the next President and Vice President and to clarify for the American people the choices before them.

The modern role of the political convention is to get the American people, just for a few moments every night for 4 days, to stop, look, and listen. That's what it is. And in those 4 days the two parties get to say, "I know you're busy. I know you've got other things on your mind. You may think you already know what this is about, but we want you to know who our leaders are, what their values are, what their vision is, what they intend to do."

Now, I've said this all over America, and you've heard me say it until the cows come home, but we have a big mission this year, first to convince the American people how important this election is. We cannot allow the Democrats to be punished by the good job all these folks have done, by the good job Al Gore's done, by the good job Joe Lieberman and our Senators have done, by the good job Dick Gephardt and our House Members have done, because people will be in such a good humor that they think, "Well, everything is rocking along here. What could possibly be the consequences of these elections?"

So you have to say, "Hey, what a country does with its prosperity, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, is as big a hurdle, a big a test, and as important a decision as what we did in adversity in 1992." You have to get that out.

Now, that is not a case we had to make in '92. Everybody knew what the deal was, right? You didn't have to be as bright as a tree full

of owls to know we had to change the economy—[laughter]—and the social direction of the country. You didn't. But you've got—listen, this is serious. You have to do that.

The second thing you've got to do is to convince the American people that there are big, meaningful differences between the two candidates for President and Vice President and our Senate and our House candidates. And that will be harder because, as you saw from their convention, we're the only side that wants the American people to know what the differences are. Because if the other side—you know, they know if the American people figure out what the real differences are, we win. Right?

You don't have any doubt of that do you?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. Do you have any doubt at all?

Audience members. No-o-o!

The President. If people know what Al Gore stands for and will do as President as compared with what his opponent will, the difference in Joe Lieberman's voting record in the Senate and Dick Cheney's voting record in the House, if people know the difference in what's in our vision for the future and what we're going to build on and what they intend to dismantle, do you have any doubt what the decision will be? Of course you don't.

Therefore, you should be of good cheer because we can turn around these polls. But it's not the work of a day. It's going to take every day between now and November, and you're going to have to go to every friend you have. And most of the people you know are not as political as your are. Isn't that right? Even the Democrats—they're not as political as you are. And you've got to go out of this convention committed to telling people, "This is a big election. There are big differences. In spite of all the good that's been done in the last 8 years, you haven't seen anything yet. You give Al Gore and Joe Lieberman 8 years and you will see that the best is yet to be." That's what we want you do to for us.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:50 a.m. at the Casa Del Mar. In his remarks, he referred to Edward G. Rendell, general chair, Mayor Dennis W. Archer, general cochair, Representative Loretta Sanchez, vice chair, and Joseph J. Andrew, national chair, Democratic National Committee; Democratic Vice Presidential candidate Senator Joseph I. Lieberman; and Republican Vice Presidential candidate Dick Cheney.

Remarks at a Jewish Community Celebration in Los Angeles

August 13, 2000

Thank you very much. Let me begin by thanking Tim and Joel Tauber and Todd Morgan and Bill Dockser and all the leaders of the organizations that brought you all here together. Thank you for giving Hillary such a good reception. I am grateful for that.

I want to say, more than anything else, how profoundly grateful I am for the support I have received from the American Jewish community since 1991, when I first began running for President.

When Hillary and I were discussing whether I should make this race, way back in '91, well over 8 years ago now, one of the things that I hoped I could do was to bring whatever powers of persuasion and understanding of history, as well as human psychology, that I've acquired

over the years, to the process of peace in the world.

It seemed to me that the end of the cold war had imposed upon the United States a very special responsibility to reach out and build bridges to countries and regions that we had too often overlooked or seen through a limited lens during the period of the cold war and to try to be a special force for peace, from the Northern Ireland problem to the Balkans to Haiti and our own region, but especially in the Middle East.

And for nearly 8 years now, we have worked to be faithful to the commitment I made to the American people when I began, that we would make the United States the world's leader for peace and freedom, for human rights and